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Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NSA-01 CIAE-00 PM-04 INR-07 L-03
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1760
SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
USNMR SHAPE
CSAF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L USNATO 0885

SECSTATE FOR EUR/RPM. SECDEF FOR OASD/ISA/I&L. CSAF FOR CVAW.

EO11652 GDS
TAGS NATO OCON MILI AWACS
SUBJECT NATO AEW - FRG POSITION

REF SECDEF 6342 DTG 010058Z FEB 77

1. FRG PERM REP PAULS TELEPHONED AMBASSADOR TODAY TO DEBRIEF HIM ON A HALF-HOUR TELEPHONE CONVERSATION HE HAD JUST CONCLUDED WITH GENERAL DOCTOR SCHNESS, STATE SECRETARY WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR EQUIPMENT AS WELL AS NATO AFFAIRS. THE SALIENT POINTS FOLLOW:

-- MINISTER LEBER'S REPLY TO SECRETARY BROWN'S LETTER ON NATO AEW (REFTEL) IS BEING PREPARED NOW. IT WILL BE READY FOR LEBER'S APPROVAL WHEN HE RETURNS ON FEBRUARY 21 FROM A BRIEF VACATION.

-- THE REPLY WILL BE "VOLUMINOUS" AND WILL TOUCH NOT
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ONLY ON AEW BUT ALSO ON OTHER TOPICS.

-- THE MAJOR INTERNAL PROBLEM FACING MINISTER LEBER IS TO CONVINCE THE ARMED FORCES TO SUPPORT NATO AEW. AIR FORCE ATTITUDES HAVE RECENTLY BECOME MORE FAVORABLE, BUT TIME WILL BE REQUIRED TO PERSUADE EVEN THEM. THE ARMY AND NAVY WILL REQUIRE EVEN MORE EFFORT AND TIME.

-- THE FRG IS NOW THINKING OF ASKING FOR A DEMONSTRATION OF AWACS, PROBABLY IN PARIL, TO CONVINCE DOUBTERS

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-- PRESUMABLY IN THE BUNDESTAG AS WELL AS IN THE ARMED FORCES -- OF ITS CAPABILITIES TO DETECT LOW-LEVEL PENE-TRATORS AND VECTOR AIR DEFENSE AIRCRAFT TO TIMELY INTER-CEPTION. (PAULS NOTED THAT THE PREPARATION OF AIR FORCE AND OTHER UNITS FOR PARTICIPATION IN THIS EXERCISE WILL REQUIRE CONSIDERABLE TIME.)

-- PAULS DISMISSED THE NEED TO ALLOW ONE ALLY (I.E., THE UK) TO DICTATE THE TIMING OF A DECISION ON NATO AEW. HE ADDED, SOMEWHAT VAGUELY, THAT THE QUESTIONS OF A FINAL FRG DECISION AND THE PROPOSED MEETING OF DEFENSE MINISTERS IN LATE MARCH ARE "NOT NECESSARILY LINKED."

2. COMMENT: BASED ON THE EVIDENCE AVAILABLE TO US, WE BELIEVE THAT FRG POLICY MAKERS HAVE TWO PRINCIPAL CONCERNS:

A. SECURING AN ACCEPTABLE COST-SHARING FORMULA, AND

B. DEVELOPING AN INTERNAL CONSENSUS SUFFICIENT TO PERMIT THEM TO SECURE BUNDESTAG APPROVAL FOR NATO AEW.

ON THE FIRST POINT, US-FRG AGREEMENT ON COST-SHARING IS CLEARLY THE KEY TO PROGRESS. ON THE SECOND, THE CON-FUSING SIGNALS THAT WE AND EMBASSY BONN HAVE BEEN GETTING SUGGEST INTERNAL DISARRAY, REFLECTING THE LIKELY DIFFI-CULTY THE FRG FACES IN OBTAINING THE NECESSARY DOMESTIC
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SUPPORT FOR AEW. IN THE CIRCUMSTANCE, WE AGRE WITH EMBASSY BONN THAT WE SHOULDNOT PRESS THE FRG AT THIS TIME, BUT RATHER KEEP OUR EARS CLOSE TO THE GROUND. PERHAPS LEBER'S REPLY TO SECRETARY BROWN WILL PROVIDE A CLEARER INDICATION OF DESIRABLE NEXT STEPS. IF IT DOES NOT, WE SEE A POTENTIAL PROBLEM IN RECONCILING THE VIEWS OF BONN AND LONDON ON THE TIMING OF A NATO DECISION ON AEW. END COMMENT. STRAUSZ-HUPE

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